

Copied

NEW YORK TIMES

FAM-LEAK*

BY RICHARD BURT*

c. 1980 N.Y. Times News Service*

WASHINGTON - MEMBERS OF A HOUSE SUBCOMMITTEE, AFTER HEARING SWORN TESTIMONY WEDNESDAY, CHARGED THAT SECRET INFORMATION ON AN "INVISIBLE" BOMBER PROJECT WAS LEAKED TO A JOURNALIST SO THAT THE DEFENSE DEPARTMENT COULD LATER OFFICIALLY DISCLOSE THE EXISTENCE OF THE PROGRAM.

THE CHARGE WAS MADE AFTER A JOURNALIST TOLD MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE ARMED SERVICES SUBCOMMITTEE ON RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT THAT A SENIOR PENTAGON OFFICIAL DISCLOSED DETAILS OF THE AIR FORCE'S "STEALTH" AIRCRAFT PROGRAM AND ENCOURAGED HIM TO WRITE AN ARTICLE ABOUT IT EARLY LAST WEEK, FOUR DAYS BEFORE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE HAROLD R. BROWN HELD A HIGHLY-PUBLICIZED BRIEFING ON THE SUBJECT FOR REPORTERS.

AT THE BRIEFING LAST FRIDAY, BROWN ANNOUNCED THAT THE AIR FORCE HAD DEVELOPED NEW AIRCRAFT THAT WERE NEARLY UNDETECTABLE BY SOVIET RADAR. THE DEVELOPMENT, HE SAID, "ALTERS THE MILITARY BALANCE."

THE JOURNALIST, BENJAMIN F. SCHEMMER, EDITOR OF THE ARMED FORCES JOURNAL, TOLD THE SUBCOMMITTEE THAT DURING HIS PENTAGON BRIEFING, HE WAS TOLD THAT BROWN WOULD NOT ANNOUNCE THE AIR FORCE'S PROJECT UNTIL AFTER HIS ARTICLE APPEARED IN PRINT. SCHEMMER ALSO SAID THAT IN HIS VIEW, THE DECISION TO DISCLOSE DETAILS OF THE SECRET PROGRAM WAS "IRRESPONSIBLE."

A HIGH-LEVEL DEFENSE OFFICIAL IN CHARGE OF SECURITY MATTERS TOLD THE COMMITTEE THAT WILLIAM J. PERRY, THE UNDER SECRETARY OF RESEARCH AND ENGINEERING, HAD DISCLOSED THE INFORMATION TO SCHEMMER, BUT HE STRONGLY DENIED THAT ANY BREACH IN SECURITY REGULATIONS HAD OCCURRED.

THE DISCLOSURE THAT SCHEMMER APPARENTLY RECEIVED AN OFFICIALLY-SANCTIONED LEAK IS ALMOST CERTAIN TO FUEL THE GROWING DEBATE OVER WHETHER THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION IS MISUSING SENSITIVE NATIONAL SECURITY INFORMATION FOR DOMESTIC POLITICAL PURPOSES. LAST WEEKEND, AFTER BROWN'S NEWS CONFERENCE, SEN. JOHN TOWER, R-TEXAS, ASSERTED THAT IN ORDER TO COUNTER CRITICISM OF ITS MILITARY PROGRAM, THE ADMINISTRATION HAD COMMITTED "A GROSS VIOLATION OF SECURITY."

IN WEDNESDAY'S HEARING, SEVERAL MEMBERS OF CONGRESS MADE SIMILAR CHARGES, SUGGESTING THAT SCHEMMER HAD BEEN GIVEN INFORMATION ON THE "STEALTH" PROGRAM SO THAT THE PENTAGON COULD THEN ANNOUNCE THAT IT WAS WORKING ON A NEW GENERATION OF INVULNERABLE AIRCRAFT. THE CHAIRMAN OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE, REP. SAMUEL S. STRATTON, D-N.Y., SAID: "IT IS QUITE CLEAR FROM INFORMATION THAT HAS BEEN GIVEN US THAT THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE IS MORE INTERESTED IN CONVINCING THE PUBLIC THAT IT IS DOING A GREAT JOB THAN IN TURNING OVER SECRETS TO THE SOVIET UNION."

1 of 2

NEW YORK TIMES

STRATTON ANNOUNCED THAT SCHEMMER WAS TESTIFYING "RELUCTANTLY," UNDER THE POSSIBLE THREAT OF BEING SERVED WITH A SUBPOENA TO APPEAR BEFORE THE COMMITTEE.

IN HIS NEWS CONFERENCE LAST FRIDAY, BROWN SAID HE WAS RELEASING INFORMATION ON THE PROGRAM, IN PART, BECAUSE OF ARTICLES ON THE SUBJECT IN THE PRESS. LATER, THOMAS B. ROSS, THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS, SAID THE INITIAL DISCLOSURES OF THE "STEALTH" AIRCRAFT PROGRAM HAD NOT COME FROM THE PENTAGON OR ELSEWHERE IN THE ADMINISTRATION.

PENTAGON AIDES SAID ROSS WAS ON VACATION AND COULD NOT BE REACHED. BUT A PENTAGON SPOKESMAN SAID THAT IN HIS STATEMENT, ROSS WAS NOT REFERRING TO THE ARMED FORCES JOURNAL ARTICLE, WHICH WAS PUBLISHED LAST WEDNESDAY, BUT TO TWO EARLIER REPORTS THAT CONTAINED ONLY INCOMPLETE DETAILS OF THE AIR FORCE PROGRAM.

THESE REPORTS, ONE IN THE WASHINGTON POST AND THE OTHER ON ABC-TV, THE SPOKESMAN SAID, WERE MAINLY RESPONSIBLE FOR BROWN'S DECISION TO GO PUBLIC WITH THE "STEALTH" PROGRAM. WHILE ACKNOWLEDGING THAT PERRY HAD DISCUSSED THE PROJECT WITH SCHEMMER ON AUG. 18, THE SPOKESMAN DECLINED TO DISCUSS THE MOTIVE FOR THE MEETING.

EFFORTS WERE MADE TO CONTACT PERRY, BUT HIS SECRETARY SAID TWICE THAT HE WAS IN A MEETING.

SPEAKING UNDER OATH, SCHEMMER TOLD THE SUBCOMMITTEE THAT THE ARMED FORCES JOURNAL HAD LEARNED OF THE EXISTENCE OF THE "STEALTH" PROGRAM IN EARLY 1978, BUT THAT PENTAGON AIDES PERSUADED HIM AT THAT TIME NOT TO PUBLISH ANYTHING ABOUT IT ON NATIONAL SECURITY GROUNDS. THE MAGAZINE IS A SPECIALIZED JOURNAL ON MILITARY AFFAIRS, WHICH HAS FREQUENTLY CRITICIZED MILITARY DECISIONS BY THE ADMINISTRATION.

SCHEMMER SAID THAT AFTER THE INCOMPLETE STORIES ON THE "STEALTH" PROJECT EARLIER IN THE MONTH, HE WAS CONTACTED BY TELEPHONE ON AUG. 18 AND OFFERED A BRIEFING ON THE SUBJECT. DECLINING TO IDENTIFY PERRY, HE SAID HE HAD A MEETING WITH A "HIGH-LEVEL DEFENSE OFFICIAL" ABOUT THE PROJECT LATER THE SAME DAY. DURING THE MEETING, SCHEMMER SAID, HE EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER THE PENTAGON AIDE'S WILLINGNESS TO DISCLOSE INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROGRAM.

SCHEMMER SAID HE WAS ENCOURAGED TO WRITE THE ARTICLE AND TOLD THAT A BRIEFING ON THE SUBJECT FOR OTHER REPORTERS WOULD NOT BE HELD UNTIL AFTER IT WAS PUBLISHED, TWO DAYS LATER.

NY-0027 1919EDT

2 of 2

UP066

R W

(DEFENSE LEAKS)

(BY NICHOLAS DANILOFF)

WASHINGTON (UPI) -- A SERIES OF LEAKS AND COUNTER-LEAKS IS CREATING THE CONFLICTING IMPRESSION THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION'S DEFENSE EFFORT IS BOTH WEAK AND STRONG AT THE SAME TIME.

IN THE LATEST EPISODE, THE PENTAGON TODAY DECLINED COMMENT ON THE LEAK OF AN INTERNAL MEMORANDUM WRITTEN BY TOP ARMY LEADERS PROTESTING 1982 BUDGET CUTS PROPOSED BY THE SENIOR PENTAGON STAFF.

ARMY SECRETARY CLIFFORD ALEXANDER AND GEN. EDWARD MEYER, ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF, WROTE THE SHARP MEMO TO DEFENSE SECRETARY HAROLD BROWN PROTESTING THE PROPOSAL TO CUT \$1.4 BILLION FROM THE MORE THAN \$40 BILLION THE ARMY HAD BEEN TOLD IT COULD EXPECT.

SUCH CUTS, SAID THE TWO HIGH OFFICIALS, WOULD RESULT IN "THE WRONG ARMY PREPARED FOR THE WRONG WAR."

PENTAGON SPOKESMAN THOMAS LAMBERT DECLINED TO COMMENT ON DISCLOSURE OF THE MEMO BY THE BALTIMORE SUN.

BROWN AND ALEXANDER ARE BOTH ON LEAVE AND NOT AVAILABLE FOR COMMENT. CORNERED IN A PENTAGON CORRIDOR BY UPI, MEYER SAID, "IT DIDN'T COME FROM ME," AND WALKED AWAY.

THE DISCLOSURE OF THE ARMY MEMO FOLLOWS A REVELATION LAST MONTH OF A SIMILARLY SHARP MEMO TO BROWN FROM NAVY SECRETARY EDWARD HIDALGO, PROTESTING A PROPOSAL TO REDUCE FROM 97 TO 84 THE NUMBER OF SHIPS TO BE BUILT BETWEEN 1981 AND 1985.

THE HIDALGO MEMO APPARENTLY WAS LEAKED TO THE THE WASHINGTON POST AND TO SEA POWER MAGAZINE.

"THESE DOCUMENTS HAVE A HABIT OF LEAKING OUT AT THIS TIME OF YEAR," SAID ONE DEFENSE OFFICIAL, WHO WAS PHILOSOPHICAL ABOUT THE TIMING OF LEAKS -- EITHER FOR POLITICAL PURPOSES, OR FOR MAXIMUM LEVERAGE IN THE NEVER-ENDING BATTLE OF THE BUDGET.

STILL, THE DISCLOSURES COULD BE THE WORK OF DISGRUNTLED OFFICIALS CALLING ATTENTION TO THEIR PLIGHT IN TRYING TO PERSUADE THE DEFENSE SECRETARY TO UP THE MILITARY BUDGET.

AT THE SAME TIME, THE PENTAGON HIERARCHY HAS ENGAGED IN SOME CAREFULLY THOUGHT-OUT LEAKING OF ITS OWN.

THE PRIME EXAMPLE IS DISCLOSURE OF THE SECRET "STEALTH" PROGRAM, IN WHICH THE UNITED STATES HAS DEVELOPED A TECHNIQUE FOR MAKING AIRCRAFT PRACTICALLY INVISIBLE TO RADAR.

DURING THE DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL CONVENTION LAST MONTH, THE WASHINGTON POST PUBLISHED THE FIRST BRIEF REFERENCE TO THE STEALTH PROGRAM ON ITS FRONT PAGE.

SINCE THEN, THE ARMED FORCES JOURNAL HAS PUBLISHED A DETAILED ACCOUNT AND CAUSED BROWN TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE PROGRAM PUBLICLY. HE ASSERTED THE ADMINISTRATION WOULD NOT BE CREDIBLE IF IT HAD TRIED TO DENY THE EXISTENCE OF THE PROGRAM.

BUT THERE MAY ALSO BE A POLITICAL MOTIVATION ON THE PART OF THE ADMINISTRATION -- TO FIGHT LEAKS WITH LEAKS AND TO TELL THE AMERICAN PUBLIC THAT U.S. DEFENSE TECHNOLOGY IS STILL AHEAD OF THE RUSSIANS.

UPI 08-28-80 01:30 PES

UP067

R F